

# CIA waives secrecy rule for \$1m Harvard study

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In a major policy departure, the US Central Intelligence Agency has agreed to accept Harvard University's guidelines and waive its traditional secrecy requirements for a research project it will fund at the John F. Kennedy School of Government.

The three-year, \$1.2 million project, announced yesterday, will examine why intelligence assessments are frequently ignored, misconstrued or overridden by US foreign policy decision-makers.

The agency's shift follows eight months of negotiations that focused on Harvard's guidelines, set by university president Derek Bok, that bar faculty members

from accepting government contracts requiring that either the existence or the results of the work be kept secret.

The CIA has traditionally insisted that all its contracts with research institutions - as well as the results of such sponsored research - be kept secret.

CIA spokesman Bill Devine said CIA deputy director Robert Gates decided to approve the unclassified project "because Harvard wanted it that way."

But Devine said the agency regarded the contract as an experiment, rather than a precedent. "Whether we will fund other open, declassified university programs in the future depends on our experience with this effort," he said.

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in a telephone interview.

The project will be administered by Ernest May, a history professor; Richard Neustadt, a professor of government and one-time aide to former President Kennedy; Gregory F. Treverton, a lecturer in foreign policy at the Kennedy school, and Peter Zimmerman, associate dean at the Kennedy school.

The fall of the shah of Iran, the more recent Iran-contra affair and the collapse of the Marcos regime in the Philippines may be among cases to be studied, Neustadt said in a telephone interview last night.

Subject choices, however, will depend in part on whether the CIA allows access to case files, he said. "They may declare that some information can't be made available," he said.

May said he and Neustadt believe that communication difficulties between intelligence specialists and policy-makers seem chronic and may be rooted in both sides failing to understand how the other thinks.

Describing the CIA's need for such a study, Devine said: "It is

ironic that we have analysts and case officers who can describe the workings of foreign governments - and how policy is made around the world - and still have little knowledge of how such policy is made in this country. The purpose of the project is to make people smarter about how to use intelligence analysis in formulating US foreign policy."

Devine noted that case studies of differing intelligence assessments can be conducted without compromising sensitive information. "Experienced researchers can separate out the information and analysis and still protect intelligence sources and methods at the same time. It's a fine line, but there are experienced, sophisticated people in the program," he added.

The Kennedy school project will also include six seminars for CIA executives to discuss the historic cases that May, Neustadt and Treverton will prepare. Two such seminars were held on a pilot basis in the last academic year, May said.

In a debate about academic freedom and sponsored research two years ago, Gates said he doubted the agency could enter into open contracts with university researchers, according to John

Shattuck, a Harvard vice president and former legislative counsel for the American Civil Liberties Union.

Shattuck, a longtime specialist in academic freedom and government secrecy, speculated that Gates' recent approval of the open contract with Harvard may reflect a new approach to the academic community by CIA Director William Webster. Webster, former FBI director, took over the reins of the agency several months ago, following the death of former CIA chief William Casey.

The agreement "is a harbinger of new directions for the CIA in its relations with the academic world," Shattuck said.

Shattuck explained that Harvard's guidelines require that every research grant the university accepts be publicly disclosed; that no sponsored research involve classified information; and that all results of sponsored research be available for open publication and distribution.

The director of Harvard's Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Nadav Safran, was forced to quit his post two years ago after it was learned he had secretly accepted \$150,000 in grants from the CIA and had given the agency the right to censor his work.